

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 00118 121447Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 CU-02 SCS-03 SCA-01 SY-05 MCT-01 /070 W
-----121530Z 018393 /43

P R 121350Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1842
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION NATO
AMCONSULATE MUNICH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRAGUE 0118

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PINT, SHUM, CSCE, CZ
SUBJECT: CHARTER 77: PERSECUTION OF PAVEL KOHOUT CONTINUES

REF PRAGUE 0117

1. SUMMARY: AS REPORTED JANUARY 11 HERALD TRIBUNE, DISSIDENT
PLAYWRIGHT PAVEL KOHOUT AND HIS WIFE WERE TAKEN INTO POLICE
CUSTODY JANUARY 10 AT THEIR HOUSE IN PRAGUE. WE HAVE NOW
LEARNED ADDITIONAL DETAILS OF THAT ARREST AND SUBSEQUENT HARRASSMENT
WHICH INDICATE THAT GOC MAY ATTEMPT TO BRING JUDICIAL ACTION
AGAINST SIGNERS OF CHARTER 77. END SUMMARY:
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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 00118 121447Z

2. POLICE SEIZED KOHOUT AND HIS WIFE MONDAY, JANUARY 10,
AND TOOK THEM TO POLICE STATION. KOHOUT WAS HELD FIVE HOURS,
DURING WHICH TIME HE WAS QUESTIONED ABOUT THE SIGNERS OF
CHARTER 77 AND PRESSURED TO BECOME A "WITNESS" AGAINST THEM, WHICH
HE REFUSED TO DO. WHEN KOHOUT ASKED TO SEE HIS WIFE POLICE
BROUGHT HER IN FOR "ABOUT THREE SECONDS," THUS FULFILLING THE LETTER

OF HIS REQUEST. IN THE MEANTIME, KOHOUT'S HOME PHONE WAS DISCONNECTED.THEY GOT HOME ABOUT 10 P.M.

3. NEXT MORNING KOHOUT TRIED TO DRIVE HIS WIFE TO HOSPITAL FOR TREATMENT OF FOOT INJURY SUFFERED IN SCUFFLE WITH POLICE THE PREVIOUS DAY, BUT POLICE APPEARED AND BLOCKED HIS WAY. ONE POLICEMEN REPORTEDLY BEAT ON KOHOUT'S CAR WITH A CROWBAR. ANOTHER WAVED A PISTOL AND YELLED OBSCENITIES. FOR "ABOUT EIGHT MINUTES" KOHOUT BEEPED "S.O.S." ON HIS AUTOMOBILE HORN, THEN OPENED DOOR, WAS BEATEN, AND TAKEN SEPARATELY FROM HIS WIFE TO POLICE STATION. AGAIN POLICE ASKED KOHOUT TO BE A "WITNESS". COUPLE WAS RELEASED AT ABOUT 6P.M. AND KOHOUT WAS SERVED SUMMONS TO REAPPEAR AT POLICE STATION AT 11 A.M. WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12.

4. SOURCE FOR ABOVE INFORMATION WAS MARLENE MANCINI, AMERICAN THEATRICAL ASSISTANT INVOLVED IN RECENT PRODUCTION OF PAVEL KOHOUT'S PLAY, "POOR MURDERER" ON BROADWAY, WHO DINED WITH KOHOUT EVENING OF JANUARY 11. MS. MANCINI SPOKE WITH CONSULAR OFFICER MORNING OF JANUARY 12.

5. COMMENT: HARSH TREATMENT KOHOUT HAS RECEIVED AT HANDS OF POLICE ACCORDS WITH VITRIOLIC TONE OF JANUARY 12 RUDE PRAVO ARTICLE ATTACKING CHARTER 77 (REFTEL). THE POLICE ASKED KOHOUT TWICE, IN SUCCESSIVE ENCOUNTERS, TO BECOME A "WITNESS" INDICATE TO US THAT GOC MAY BRING LEGAL ACTION AGAINST DISSIDENTS IF A CASE CAN BE PUT TOGETHER. TERROR TACTICS EMPLOYED BY POLICE SUGGESTS THEY MEAN BUSINESS.
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PAGE 03 PRAGUE 00118 121447Z

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Message Attributes

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